

Public Service Commission of Wisconsin



Universal Service Fund Telemedicine Equipment Program

Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015 Grant Application Guidelines and Forms

**Application Deadline
April 17, 2014**

Introduction

The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin is seeking applications for Medical Telecommunications Equipment Grants. The Medical Telecommunications Equipment Grant Program (Telemedicine program) was created to provide funding to nonprofit medical clinics, hospitals or public health agencies for the purchase of specialized telecommunications equipment designed to augment or enhanced the delivery of medical services. The Commission may award one or more grants that, in aggregate, do not exceed an annual total of \$500,000 during Fiscal Year 2014 to public and private entities that meet the eligibility requirements set forth in Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 160.115(6)(a)1. The Commission will also consider in June 2014 the level of funding for FY 2015 Telemedicine grants (not to exceed \$500,000).

Eligible Applicants

Nonprofit medical clinics, hospitals and public health agencies are eligible to request a grant from the Telemedicine program. For purposes of the Telemedicine program, nonprofit medical clinic or hospital includes any medical facility that:

1. Is a nonprofit organization governed by a Board of Directors;
2. Serves federally-designated health professional shortage areas as defined in 42 USC § 254e(a)(1), medically underserved areas, or medically underserved populations, and;
3. Fulfills one, or both, of the following:
 - a. Provides service to all patients regardless of insurance status,
 - b. Uses a sliding fee scale for uninsured patients based on income status.

The definition of public health agency that is applicable to the Telemedicine Equipment Program includes:

1. The Department of Health and Family Services;
2. Local health departments as defined in Wis. Stat. § 250.01(4); and,
3. Health care facilities or programs operated by a tribe, or tribal organization under the Indian Self-Determination Act (25 USC § 450f et seq.).

Anticipated Funds Available

In accordance with Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 160.115(3), a maximum of \$500,000 per fiscal year may be disbursed under the Telemedicine program. The Commission has allocated \$500,000 for Telemedicine grants for FY 2014. The Commission may allocate a similar amount for FY 2015 when it sets its FY 2015 USF budget in June 2014.

Applications may not request funding for projects intended to be disbursed over multiple years. Applications may not be for equipment that has already been purchased. There is no specified dollar limit for any particular project.

No Matching Funds Requirement

No matching funds are required for this program; however, the application should include an explanation of how any portion of the project, or purchase price not covered by the Telemedicine grant, will be paid for. In addition, commitment of other resources toward a project or purchase may be considered as a positive factor when the grant applications are rated.

Grant Application Submission and Deadline

All applicants are required to submit a signed cover sheet, signed affidavit, budget summary form, and project narrative. The cover sheet, affidavit form and budget summary form are located at the end of this application packet. Electronic copies are also available from the PSC website (see end of application packet). The Commission is moving to all electronic filings and processes and these grant applications are included for the first time this year.

Applications must be submitted to the Commission via E-mail addressed to Dennis.Klaila@wisconsin.gov and must include a scanned signed cover sheet and signed affidavit. If for any reason the production of these electronic documents is not possible please contact Dennis Klaila (contact information at the end of this packet) as soon as possible to make other arrangements.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the Commission receives all documents in a readable format prior to the deadline. **No late applications will be considered. Please note that applications mailed will need to be received at the Commission by Friday, April 17, 2014.**

Application Procedure

A complete application includes the following items and should be assembled in the order listed below. A copy of the required forms may be found on the PSC web site at:

<http://psc.wi.gov/utilityInfo/tele/usf/programs/tmSummary.htm>

1. Universal Service Program Grant Application Form

Use the form included at the end of this application packet (also available on-line), then print it and file it with other required documents.

- Leave State Application Number (above Section I) blank.
- Fill out Sections I and II.
- Signature of the certifying representative of the organization is required in Section II of the form.
- Leave Section III blank.

2. Affidavit of Eligibility

Use the form included at the end of this application packet (also available on-line), to certify that the USF support will be used for the purpose granted. This is required by Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 160.115(5)(f). ***The form must be signed by a certifying representative of the organization.***

3. Budget Summary

Use the form included at the end of this application packet or use a copy available in pdf and Word format on-line. Attach price quotes from vendors to the budget summary.

4. Project Narrative

The narrative should address the criteria listed in the *Review Criteria* listed below.

The application must be submitted by the deadline date. Do not use binders, plastic covers, folders, or cover sheets other than the one included in this application package. Once filed, all applications become the property of the Commission, are subject to open records laws of the state, and will not be returned to the applicant.

Review Criteria

In preparing the Project Narrative, the criteria should be addressed by the heading and the order in which they appear below. Each criterion should be addressed separately and completely so the response stands alone and does not refer to outside sources. Failure to address any criterion will result in reduction of points by the reviewers. The page size should be a standard 8-1/2"x 11" page, with a legible font no smaller than 11 points, and a minimum of 1" margins throughout. **The entire Project Narrative section should be no more than six (6) single-sided and single-spaced numbered pages.**

1. Applicant Overview

- Briefly describe the applicant organization(s) and a description of the population being served by the organization. Include statistics and a description of rural, underserved or disabled populations served by the organization.

2. Project Purpose

- Define the specific need or problem that is currently not being met.
- Describe how the specific need or problem may be met through purchase of telecommunications equipment.
- Describe, in detail, how the purchase of the equipment will promote technologically advanced medical services, enhance access to medical care in rural, or underserved areas of the state or enhance access to medical care by underserved populations or persons with disabilities.

3. Project Outcomes

- Identify realistic, measurable outcomes expected to result from the purchase of the telecommunications equipment. Anticipated outcomes should relate to the need/problem statement.

4. Description of Equipment to be Purchased

- Describe the equipment to be purchased, including a description of how the equipment operates. ***General purpose use computers or computers for use in doctors' offices can not be funded by this grant program.***
- Describe any installation costs or costs for training for operating the equipment. These costs should be nominal.
- Funding can only be requested for equipment that has not yet been purchased.
- Describe any warranty or maintenance agreements included in the purchase price of the equipment. ***No more than one year of a maintenance agreement*** can be included in the purchase price of the equipment.
- Identify the vendors for each piece of equipment proposed to be purchased. If the vendor is not yet selected, provide information on how the equipment price was determined and the process to be used for selecting the vendor.
- Explain why the chosen equipment was selected.
- Describe any partnerships, community support, or other collaborations with individuals or organizations that will be involved in the purchase of the equipment.

Budget Detail

- Describe the steps taken to secure the telecommunications equipment at reasonable prices. Obtaining several bids for the equipment and reporting the results of the cost review process can accomplish this.
- Identify the vendors for each piece of the telecommunication equipment being purchased or describe the process being used to select a vendor. If the applicant is chosen to receive a grant under this program, copies of bids may be required to be submitted prior to release of grant dollars.
- List and describe co-funding sources, partnerships and other relationships or commitments that are part of the project.
- Describe the financial need for your organization to receive funding from this grant program so that it is able to purchase the equipment.

5. Evaluation

- Explain how the project will be evaluated after the equipment is installed.
- Describe any measurement tools that will be used to determine the extent to which the project meets each of its objectives.

Review and Selection Process

All grant applications will be subject to a screening and review process conducted by Commission staff, a review team and the Commissioners. Reviewers will have expertise in technical or programmatic aspects of information systems, medicine, telecommunications or universal service issues. The process is outlined below:

Initial Screening

Commission staff will conduct an initial screening of all applications. The applications will be screened for timeliness of filing, and eligibility of the applicant as a nonprofit medical clinic or public health agency as defined in Wis. Admin. Code §§ PSC 160.115(b) and (c) and completeness of the application. Any application that fails the initial screening may be eliminated from further review.

Application Review

A panel of technology or program professionals will review applications passing the initial screening. The reviewers will use a rating checklist that gives a score to each application based on the criteria outlined in the *Review Criteria* section. Particular attention will be paid to the potential success of the project to promote technologically advanced medical services, to enhance access to medical care in rural or underserved areas of the state, or to enhance access to medical care by underserved populations or persons with disabilities. Results of this analysis and review will be reported in a memorandum to the Commissioners.

In past Telemedicine Grant ratings, projects that scored high were innovative, used technologically advanced equipment and directly served the needs of the patients. While some projects that indirectly served the needs of patients (e.g. medical record systems) or were basic technology (e.g. telephone systems), have received funding, they generally score lower. Other information such as financial need of the applicant or populations served by the applicant factored into funding decisions in those instances.

Final Decision on Grant Awards

In making the final grant funding decisions, the Commission shall consider information including the following:

- Is the applicant a nonprofit, medical, clinic or public health agency located in Wisconsin?
- Will the purchase of the telecommunication equipment promote technologically advanced medical services, enhance access to medical care in rural or underserved areas of the state or enhance access to medical care by underserved populations or persons with disabilities?
- Is the applicant able to pay for the portion of the cost of the project not funded under the USF grant?
- What steps has the applicant taken to secure the equipment at reasonable prices?

- Has the applicant filed all the required information listed in this application guideline?

Public health agencies and nonprofit organizations that operate at more than one location, may receive USF support for telecommunications equipment at more than one location, but before approving an application involving an additional location, the Commission shall consider how much total USF support has been received by an agency or organization in the fiscal year, and the total amount remaining to be disbursed for the fiscal year.

The Commission may consider other factors in its decision-making such as:

1. Analysis provided by staff.
2. Analysis of the review panel.
3. Number of grants and dollars previously awarded to the applicant.
4. Geographic distribution of the proposed grants.
5. Financial need of the organization and need for Telemedicine Grant funds to enable the project to be completed.
6. Diversity of needs being met by the proposed grants.
7. Diversity of types of projects requesting funding.
8. Availability of funds from the USF budget.

The Commission makes its decision in Open Meetings of the Commission. All grant applicants will be notified in writing of intended award decisions. Notification of award decisions for FY 2014 and FY 2015 will be made in June 2014.

Reporting and Payment Process

Grant projects are expected to start within two months of award notification. Applicants should notify the Commission if this expectation cannot be met. A *Summary Financial Statement* will be enclosed with the letter notifying applicants that they have received a grant award. This statement must be used to request reimbursement for funds expended under the grant award. Grantees will be required to submit a brief final evaluation report describing how well the project is promoting technologically advanced medical services, enhancing access to medical care in rural or underserved areas of the state, or enhancing access to medical care by underserved populations or persons with disabilities. Failure to submit the final evaluation report will be considered breach of the grant contract. Details regarding these filings will be included in the letter notifying applicants of the grant award.

The Commission retains the right to revoke a grant if the funded applicant and project do not comply with Commission guidelines; or, fail to implement the project in accordance with the application as submitted and approved. In addition, the Commission reserves the right to take any other action allowed by law in the event an approved project is implemented in a manner inconsistent with the Telemedicine Equipment Program.

Withdrawal of Application

Applicants may withdraw their proposal at any time by providing a written request to the Commission.

False, Misleading, or Omitted Statements

False or misleading statements or omissions that render the information provided on an application to be false or misleading are grounds for rejection of an application, for denial, or for termination of funding. The applicant may also be required to reimburse the USF. In addition, the Commission reserves the right to take any other action allowed by law.

No Obligation for Future Funding

If an application is selected for funding, the Commission has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Funding is limited to the amount awarded by the Commission when it makes its decision on grant awards. A subsequent award of funding for purchase of additional equipment is entirely at the discretion of the Commission.

Technical Assistance

Staff will provide limited technical assistance to all prospective applicants as staff resources allow, until the time that a proposal has been submitted to the Commission. Staff will only provide answers to specific questions and make general comments in regard to the grant application guidelines and forms. Staff will not provide specific technical suggestions for a particular applicant nor review a draft copy of a forthcoming application.

In compliance with state regulations regarding conflict of interest and open records, Commissioners will not provide any specific advice or assistance to applicants. All applicants will be referred to Commission staff.

For Further Information, Contact:

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